

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF MINSHULL VERNON & DISTRICT PARISH COUNCIL  
HELD AT LEIGHTON ACADEMY, MINSHULL NEW ROAD, LEIGHTON, CREWE  
ON 18 MAY 2015**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Les Horne Chairman  
Councillor M McGlone Vice-Chairman

Councillor W T Beard Councillor R Lee  
Councillor D Ridings Councillor P Wright

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors Linda Horne and B Palin

Note: Each Member present, having been elected to the office of parish councillor on 7 May 2015, signed their Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Councillors Linda Horne and B Palin would sign their Declarations prior to the start of the next meeting.

**1 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

The Parish Council was invited to elect a Chairman to serve until the Annual Meeting in 2016.

**RESOLVED:** That Councillor Les Horne be elected Chairman to serve until the Annual Meeting in 2016.

(Note: Councillor Horne signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office)

**2 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

The Parish Council was invited to elect a Vice-Chairman to serve until the Annual Meeting in 2016.

**RESOLVED:** That Councillor M McGlone be elected Vice-Chairman to serve until the Annual Meeting in 2016.

(Note: Councillor McGlone signed a Declaration of Acceptance of Office)

**3 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Members were invited to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest or non-pecuniary interest which they had in any item of business on the agenda, the nature of that interest, and in respect of disclosable interests, to leave the meeting prior to the discussion of that item.

No declarations were made.

**4 REGISTRATION OF INTERESTS**

Parish Councillors were required to complete a new 'Registration of Member's Interests' form and this must be within 28 days of the date on which elected councillors had signed their Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

**5 MINUTES – 27 APRIL 2015**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 27 April 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## 6 VACATION OF OFFICE THROUGH NON-ATTENDANCE (The 6-month rule)

Members were reminded that under S.85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, "... if a member of a local authority fails throughout a period of six consecutive months from the date of his last attendance to attend any meeting of the authority, he shall, unless the failure was due to some reason approved by the authority before the expiry of that period, cease to be a member of the authority."

The effect of this provision was that the Member automatically ceased to hold office as soon as the six-month period expired if that Member's Council had not formally approved the councillor's absence before that date. This meant that before the six-month period ran out, the Council would:

- Need know the reason for the absence;
- Must decide (by resolution) whether or not it approves the reason given for that councillor's absence.

Approval may be given by the Council to an absence in advance; for example, where a member is intending to work abroad for an extended period.

The responsibility for ensuring that a member of council does not vacate his or her office through continuous failure to attend meetings rests entirely with the individual councillor.

If a Member chooses not to attend Council meetings, but attends a 'meeting of the authority' where the functions of the authority have been delegated, under Section 85(2) this shall be deemed to be attendance at a meeting of the authority (for example, Committee or Sub-Committee meetings).

The responsibility for ensuring that a member of council does not vacate his or her office through continuous failure to attend meetings rests entirely with the individual councillor.

## 7 ELECTIONS – 7 MAY 2015

### 7.1 Local Elections Results and Vacancies

Following the elections on 7 May 2015, eight candidates had been returned unopposed. There were currently 14 vacancies and the Parish Council was invited to consider co-opting to each of the vacancies.

Members were invited to consider arrangements for co-opting to the remaining seats and agreed that a poster be designed, emphasising that there were no councillors currently representing Leighton Rural or Woolstanwood.

Former Councillor Ian Baxter, who was not available at this meeting, had indicated that he wished to be co-opted and was expected to be at the June meeting. It was reported that Byron Evans had also declared himself to be a candidate for co-option and would attend the June meeting.

**RESOLVED:** That the Clerk design a poster for display in local shops and on the notice-boards.

### 7.2 Borough Council Elections

It was noted that Derek Bebbington, Michael Jones, Margaret Simon and Jacquie Weatherill, had been re-elected as Cheshire East Councillors.

## 8 REVIEW OF DELEGATION ARRANGEMENTS

### Staffing Committee:

The Parish Council was invited to appoint Members to the Staffing Committee. At present, membership comprised three substantive Members and two substitutes; however, in view of

the difficulties experienced in trying to convene a meeting during the last twelve months, it was suggested that membership be increased to five Members, with no substitutes and a quorum of three.

**RESOLVED:** (a) That Councillors W T Beard, R Lee, M McGlone and D Ridings be appointed to the Staffing Committee; and

(b) That a fifth Member be appointed at the June meeting.

#### War Memorial Dedication Ceremony – 4 June 2016

The Parish Council was invited to re-appoint Members to the working group which had been set up in February 2015.

**RESOLVED:** That Councillors W T Beard, Les Horne, D Ridings and P Wright be appointed to the working group set up to consider detailed arrangements for the War Memorial Dedication Ceremony in June 2016.

### **9 COMMUNICATIONS PROTOCOL**

The Parish Council did not currently have a communications protocol in place. The Clerk submitted a document which had been drawn up in accordance with the “Governance Toolkit for Parish and Town Councils” prepared as a partner publication by the Association of Council Secretaries and Solicitors, Society of Local Council Clerks, Standards for England, the National Association of Local Councils and the Local Government Association. It also took into account the principles in the National Code for Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity 2001 and included a section on e-mail etiquette based on Debrett’s guidance.

**RESOLVED:** That the Communications Protocol be adopted.

### **10 APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODIES**

The Parish Council was invited to appoint representatives to the following outside bodies. Attendance at such meetings would count as an approved duty and expenses may be claimed in accordance with the Parish Council’s Members Expenses Scheme.

**RESOLVED:** That appointments be made as follows:

- Cheshire Association of Local Councils  
Councillors Les Horne and P Wright
- Police Cluster meetings  
Councillors Les Horne and P Wright
- Hill Top and Hole House Farms Local Liaison Committee  
Councillor M McGlone
- Nantwich Highways Group<sup>1</sup>  
Councillor Les Horne
- Crewe Highways Group  
Councillor W T Beard

Invitations to attend other outside bodies could be dealt with as and when they arose.

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<sup>1</sup> The appointments to the two Highways Groups were agreed later in the meeting but have been included here for convenience.

## 11 FINANCIAL MATTERS

### 11.1 End of Year Accounts (1 April 2014 – 31 March 2015)

The following documents comprised the accounts for the financial year 1 April 2014 – 31 March 2015. The Council was asked to approve the accounts for auditing purposes.

- (a) Annual Return (Page 1)
- (b) Balance sheet to 31 March 2015 – submitted to April 2015 meeting
- (c) Accounts ledger showing receipts and payments.
- (d) Budget proposals report showing the process by which the precept was agreed (as submitted to the Council meeting in December 2013).
- (e) Schedule of variances and explanation of variances.
- (f) Assets Register
- (g) Risk Management schedules (for 2014-2015)
- (h) VAT Re-claim evidence - submitted to April 2015 meeting.
- (j) Standing Orders and Financial Regulations
- (k) Insurance documentation

**RESOLVED:** (a) That the Assets Register be amended as follows:

		£
ADD	Verge masters	532.00
	Automated External Defibrillator (AED)	800.00
	Cabinet for AED	520.00
	Two gazebos	150.00
	Speed gun	900.00
	Auger	20.00
	<b>TOTAL ADDITIONS</b>	<b><u>2,922.00</u></b>
DELETE	Retro-fit DayBright LED illuminated Zebra-crossing (CEC had taken over responsibility for continued maintenance/replacement)	<b>(3,600)</b>
	<b>REVISED ASSETS FIGURE</b>	<b><u>168,781</u></b>

(b) That item (e) variances schedule, be submitted to the June meeting; and

(c) That following an adjustment to the assets figure (to £168,781) on the Annual Return, the accounts for 2014-2015 be approved for auditing purposes and signed by the Chairman.

### 11.2 Authorisation of Payments

**RESOLVED:** That the following payments be authorised:

£250.00	Councillor Les Horne: Chairman's allowance (allowance to meet the expenses of the office – ss 15(5) and 34(5) Local Government Act 1972)
£30.00	Cheshire Association of Local Councils – Member's induction training Councillor D Riding
£88.33	HM Revenue & Customs – tax on Clerk's salary.
£4.80	W T Beard – mileage claim
£624.00	Cardiac Science – purchase of cabinet for AED (£520.00 net and £104.00 VAT)
£1,306.50	Cheshire Association of Local Councils (ChALC) affiliation fee
£10.00	ChALC – purchase of 10 'Good Councillor's Guide' at £1 each.

Note: Although listed on the agenda, invoices from both Suddenstrike and Charlie Ashworth had not yet been received.

### **11.3 Grant Application – Mablins Lane Summer Fair**

Although the Clerk had received a grant application from Mablins Lane School, the Clerk had not issued it to Members. The Parish Council agreed to consider the application in the absence of the completed form, although Members were able to view at the meeting an electronic copy of the letter from the PTA.

The Clerk would issue the grant application to Members under separate cover.

**RESOLVED:** That a grant of £470 be made to Mablins Lane PTA to fund the cost of its proposed activities at the Mablins Lane summer fair.

### **12 CALENDAR OF MEETINGS – 2015-2016**

The Council was asked to approve the calendar of meetings for 2015-2016. The calendar also included a list of public holidays, on which there were some errors. The Clerk agreed to submit a revised calendar, for information, to the next meeting.

**RESOLVED:** That the calendar of Parish Council meetings for 2015-2016 be approved.

### **13 ANNUAL REPORT- 2014-2015**

The Annual Report for 2014-2015 was submitted.

**RESOLVED:** That the following be agreed:

- The paragraph referring to current parish councillor vacancies in the parish (Chairman's report) be highlighted.
- The article on the notice-boards be amended to reflect that there were four notice-boards (1) outside the Coach and Horses public house; (2) Parkers Road; (3) Minshull New Road; and (4) notice-board currently being repaired to be located on Coppenhall Lane at Woolstanwood.
- Copies of the report be made available to the site office of the Bloor Homes development on Parkers Road for new residents.
- Marshfield Bank businesses to be included in the distribution.
- Quotations for printing and distribution be submitted to the next meeting.

### **14 POLICE MATTERS**

There were no police matters to report.

### **15 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (10 MINUTES)**

There were no members of the public in attendance.

### **16 JAMES ATKINSON WAY – PLAY EQUIPMENT**

The James Atkinson Way Group (JAW) had provided a quotation for play equipment amounting to £5,978, plus VAT. The Council had allocated a sum of £12,000 in its budget for 2015-2016 to provide play equipment in the parish although no specific locations had been agreed.

Members were invited to consider the quotation from Fenland Leisure Products Ltd. in the sum of £5,978.00 plus VAT. It was understood that the company had proprietary rights over the products quoted. In these circumstances, as the equipment was manufactured and sold only by the owner of the patent, formula, brand name, or trademark associated with the product, there was no requirement to seek other quotations, in accordance with Financial Regulation 11.1 (a) (vi), viz:

*'11.1 (a) Every contract shall comply with these financial regulations, and no exceptions shall be made otherwise than in an emergency provided that these regulations shall not apply to contracts which relate to items (i) to (vi) below:*

*.....(vi) for goods or materials proposed to be purchased which are proprietary.....'*

Members agreed that the equipment should be purchased and that, as with the equipment provided at two playing fields during 2014-2015, the Borough Council should be asked to arrange for the installation of the equipment and agree to the continued maintenance, repair and any replacement.

**RESOLVED:** (a) That the quotation from Fenland Leisure Products Ltd. in the sum of £5,978 (plus VAT) be accepted for the provision of the following equipment:

- |                         |        |
|-------------------------|--------|
| • 1 x Spiro Whirl       | £4,028 |
| • 1 x Low octopus slide | £1,700 |
| • Delivery charge       | £250   |

(b) That Cheshire East Council be asked to consider installing the equipment at James Atkinson Way playground, and take over full responsibility for the maintenance, repair and any replacement of the equipment following its installation.

## 17 PLANNING MATTERS

The Parish Council was asked to comment on the following planning applications:

15/2193N 44 Kestrel Drive, Crewe (two-storey side extension)

15/2126N Land at Moss Farm, Moss Lane, Warmingham  
Solar farm and associated development

**RESOLVED:** That no objections be raised to planning applications Nos. 15/2193N and 15/2126N.

## 18 DEDICATION CEREMONY 4 JUNE 2016 – WAR MEMORIAL, BRADFIELD GREEN

The Working Group had not met since the last Council meeting.

## 19 NOTICE-BOARD (FORMERLY AT PARKERS ROAD)

At the previous meeting, the Clerk had been asked to make arrangements for the damaged notice-board, currently at Zero-Ads, to be returned to Councillor McGlone's home; and to arrange for the purchase of a notice-board door from Whitehill Direct which had supplied the notice-board.

The Clerk reported that she had not yet been able to make these arrangements.

## 20 SHARED INFORMATION

Members were able to share information or to report on attendance at meetings of outside bodies. Topics included the following:

- Fly-tipping Moss Lane
- The Chairman tabled a plan of the proposed advisory speed limit of 20 mph on Minshull New Road in vicinity of Leighton Academy. This would be installed on 1 June 2015 at the same time as the lay-by.
- Lamp-post on Parkers Road was tilted. The Member who reported this agreed to contact CE Highways and United Utilities as there was also evidence of flooding.
- Land at the rear of the Co-op store was untidy. As reported on previous occasions, this was private land; if the detritus included food, Environmental Health could be asked to take action.
- Speed watch recent activities.

**21 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**22 June 2015**

**APPROVED**

.....Chairman

The meeting commenced at 7.20 pm and concluded at 8.55 pm